

**2013 Virginia Watershed Organization Support and Small Nonpoint Source
Project Funding**

Request for Proposals

*Source of Funding: Federal Clean Water Act Section 319(h) Nonpoint Source Implementation Grant and
Section 117 Chesapeake Bay Implementation Grant*

Issued By:

Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
Email: npsgrants@deg.virginia.gov
Division of Water, Office of Watershed Programs

Physical Address:
629 East Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

RFP and Grant Awards Timeline

<u>November 25, 2013</u>	Issue request for proposals
<u>December 13, 2013</u>	Question and Answer Session: 1:00 PM, Phone # 8668425779 – Conference Code: 6297788535
<u>January 1, 2014</u>	Deadline for submitting proposals
<u>February 1, 2014</u>	Target date to begin executing project agreements (pre-award costs allowed for approved activities from 1/1/2014)
<u>December 31, 2014</u>	Target completion date for all project awards (1 year from start date)

A. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Protecting America's Waters: *Protect and Restore Watersheds and Aquatic Ecosystems.*

The purpose of this Request for Proposals is to solicit proposals to establish agreements through competitive negotiation that promote watershed stewardship and TMDL implementation. The proposed activities should foster partnerships among community organizations, state and local agencies to facilitate watershed management and achieve watershed protection and restoration initiatives and promote pollution reduction activities.

A watershed roundtable or watershed organization consists of stakeholders who have a vested interest in their communities and are concerned about local water quality. A roundtable can be the driving force in the watershed, fostering regional education and outreach activities and solutions to restore and protect water quality. Roundtables and similar organizations fulfill an important role in statewide efforts

to improve local water quality and restore the Chesapeake Bay by providing regional forums for stakeholders to participate in, and by addressing local water quality concerns through support of TMDL implementation and watershed management.

Virginia's watershed roundtables and other watershed basin based organizations serve as vehicles for organizing broad stakeholder groups and communicating about nonpoint source (NPS) implementation objectives. Grants will be awarded to roundtables, and other critical communication consortiums to include local governments, planning district commissions, soil and water conservation districts and nonprofit organizations. The roundtables and other enlisted groups will influence important decision makers and select audiences to resolve ways to accommodate NPS reductions within their operations. Funding will be awarded to these organizations to strengthen communication among key stakeholders in local and regional efforts to improve water quality such as local governments, planning district commissions, soil and water conservation districts, targeted industry groups, nonprofit organizations, civic groups, and other partners. Funding will support continued collaboration building and will strengthen on-going implementation of TMDL implementation plans (i.e. watershed clean-up plans). Project funding may support meetings for coordination; education and communication; educational forums, workshops, networks, and programs; water quality monitoring; priority basin or watershed restoration and implementation initiatives; or other defined priorities to further implementation

The expected outcomes or results should be

- the improvement of water quality in river basins and in TMDL implementation project areas,
- contact and interaction with necessary stakeholders in each basin to address nonpoint source pollutants and reduction requirements based on the uses of their lands, and/or
- increased sign-up and participation in BMP Cost-share programs in TMDL implementation project areas.

Awardees must participate in the development of Virginia's Nonpoint Source Management Plan and (if applicable) Chesapeake Bay TMDL Watershed Implementation Plan milestones, including but not limited to participation in the statewide meeting tentatively scheduled for February 25, 2014

Proposals received in response to this RFP will be considered for funding for a 1-year grant with a potential 1-year renewal beginning February 1, 2014 (activity may begin January 1, 2014 and will be eligible for pre-award cost) and must end December 31, 2014.

B. ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Only soil and water conservation districts, planning district commissions and non-profit organizations (501(c)3) that are operating or serving as a local or regional watershed organization and/or watershed roundtable are considered eligible to apply.

C. INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

- Lobbying: grant funds may not be used for litigation against Virginia or the United States or for participating in various forms of lobbying. If successful, applicants must certify that they are compliant with Title 40 CFR Part 34, New Restrictions on Lobbying as well abide with respective OMB Circular (A-21, A-87 or A-122).

- Outreach specifically delivered as K-12 education. However, participation by children or schools in water quality monitoring, or as volunteers in buffer and/or tree planting or other restoration projects is acceptable.
- Food and Refreshments:

Grant funds shall not be used for food/refreshments at activities/events (e.g. meetings, workshops, training, field days or conferences) unless the objectives of the event would be compromised if food/refreshments were not provided. The criteria to be used to determine whether an event qualifies and providing food/refreshments is reasonable and appropriate include:

- Routine Meeting: light refreshments for routine meetings such as regular meetings, are not paid.
- Training/Workshop/Extended Meeting: grant funds may be used for the cost of meals or light refreshments when the function occurs over an extended period of time and the agenda includes a working meal or working break.
- Reception/Awards Event: grant funds may be used for the cost of meals or light refreshments.

D. ELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Through this RFP, DEQ intends to award funding for the support of Watershed Roundtable and watershed organizational activity that leads to a positive impact on the water quality of the rivers, lakes, estuaries and bays of the Commonwealth of Virginia. All activities must address Nonpoint Source pollution prevention, watershed health and community engagement in TMDL implementation.

- **Administrative Support (Limited up to 40% of grant request)**
 - Annual stakeholder meetings (workshop, forum or other event with stakeholder engagement and participation.
 - Allowable expenses include: postage, speakers travel/fee, printing & copying materials, refreshments/breaks if it meets Food and Refreshment Policy) (Maximum \$1000 depending on attendance and event purpose)
 - Steering Committee Meetings (maximum \$150/meeting)
 - Business and administrative information should be posted for transparency (e.g. bylaws, strategic plans, and minutes).
 - Website Hosting & Maintenance (maximum of \$100/month, plus annual fee up to \$100/year). Groups should update website content on a monthly basis.
 1. The focus of effort should be on creating content and events specific to watershed that reflect the Commonwealth priorities for water quality and watershed health and local watershed cleanup goals.
 2. Groups should strive to maintain and update Information related to their watershed on a monthly basis.
 3. Connections to general content, other agencies, resources, reports, etc. should be accomplished via URL links rather than duplication of information (e.g. other RTs, grants and funding opportunities, general homeowner tips, statewide events).
 4. RT business and administrative information should be posted for transparency (bylaws, strategic plans, minutes, presentations, newsletters, annual reports, etc.)

- Office supplies and equipment usage (maximum \$600/year)
- Collaborative project development (develop grant proposals or initiatives for NPS restoration and protection activities)
- Increased membership or executive board capacity and future sustainability
- Roundtable or watershed organization coordinator or facilitator
- Roundtable/watershed organization membership sustainability
- **Special Education, Outreach and Engagement Projects**
 - Large watershed educational event: forums, workshops, conference, regional networks or other programs (e.g. “Watershed Awareness Day”, “Regional Watershed Conference”, etc.) (Limit to \$2000 per event)
 1. The focus should be on events and programs that focus on local watershed cleanup, restoration and protection goals and specific targets.
 2. Event must demonstrate active participation of a large number of individuals from many interest groups
 - Special reports or outreach tools regarding watershed health and restoration (e.g. Healthy Waters study)
 - Develop strategic plan or long-term organization plan for watershed conservation
 - Web based initiatives and electronic media outreach.
 - Signage for watershed protection or education.
- **Citizen Water Quality Monitoring (limit of 20% of grant request) -**
 - Development of a water quality monitoring (WQM) plan
 - Develop and maintain an EPA/DEQ approved Quality Assurance Project Plan, QAPP (this is required of any program receiving WQM funding)
 - Implementation of a volunteer water quality monitoring plan that will provide consistent and verifiable data
 - Purchasing of authorized supplies to implement an approved WQ monitoring plan and QAPP.
 - Training of volunteers to collect data.
 - Development of ‘trainers’ certified by DEQ that can train volunteers in WQM data collection.
- **Nonpoint Source Pollution Prevention or Restoration Projects (minimum of 50% of award request) – must provide information on BMP installation for pollution reduction calculations**
 - Pet waste (bag/collection stations, composters/digesters, education programs, etc.)
 - Watershed restoration activities: stream restoration, rain gardens, rain barrels, riparian buffer plantings, turf to trees plantings, riparian buffer maintenance activities, soil testing
 - Low impact development demonstrations (e.g. pervious pavers).
 - Mapping of stormwater infrastructure and BMP prioritization for local governments

E. AVAILABLE FUNDING

Funding is available statewide for award and distribution of watershed organization and NPS grants. The award range for projects is a minimum of \$5,000 and a maximum of \$15,000. DEQ intends to fund quality proposals across the Commonwealth such that many watersheds in Virginia will benefit from the collective effort of the watershed organizations. DEQ encourages partnerships between organizations within a given watershed.

F. APPLICATION PACKAGE REQUIREMENTS, PREPARATION AND SUBMISSION INSTRUCTIONS

The application package for includes several required components. All required elements must be submitted in order for the proposal to be considered for review. Optional submittal elements may enhance the application package but ultimately decisions will be based upon the required submittal elements.

REQUIRED APPLICATION DOCUMENTS: All elements must be in an **electronic** format (PDF or Microsoft Word). Please do not provide any additional information not indicated below. Other information will not be considered.

- Completed 2013 Watershed Roundtable or watershed organization Application, Budget and Narrative Form
- Copy of organizational charter and organizational structure describing roll or work serving as watershed organization. A link to appropriate website describing organizational structure and purpose is acceptable. The link(s) or submittal should address the following informational needs:
 - a charter and purpose statement for the organization,
 - a list of representative organizations or stakeholders making up membership or copy of board of directors representatives (or steering committee).

In order to be considered for selection for this 2013 Watershed Organization and NPS Project RFP, applicants are required to submit (via E-mail or CD-ROM) **an electronic version** (Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat PDF files are preferred) of the completed Project Proposal Application to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality **by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, January 1, 2014**. Incomplete applications and those that are not delivered or mailed as specified above will be disqualified.

Email application packages to: npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov

Please use the email subject line: 2013 Watershed RFP_<insert name of applicant>

If mailing a CD-ROM or paper application it must be received by the date listed above (not post-marked). Items received after January 1, 2014 will not be included in the review process. Please address the final application package to:

Nicole Sandberg, Watershed Programs
Division of Water
Virginia Department of Environmental Quality
PO Box 1105, Richmond VA 23218-1105
629 E. Main Street Richmond, VA 23219-2405 (UPS/FedEx only)

G. DEQ CONTACTS

DEQ_2013_RFP-Roundtables

General questions regarding this request for proposals, and the grant application process should be directed to NPS Grant Manager, Nicole Sandberg, email: npsgrants@deq.virginia.gov, phone: 804-698-4043.

Specific questions regarding regional watershed organization activities should be directed to the identified Watershed Field Coordinator or regional contact person for each of the DEQ Regional Offices:

- **Piedmont Regional Office:** megan.bascone@deq.virginia.gov, (804) 527-5187, Megan Sommers-Bascone or may.sligh@deq.virginia.gov, (804) 450-3802, May Sligh; the Piedmont Regional Office serves the counties of Amelia, Brunswick, Charles City, Chesterfield, Dinwiddie, Essex, Gloucester, Goochland, Greensville, Hanover, Henrico, King and Queen, King William, Lancaster, Mathews, Middlesex, New Kent, Northumberland, Powhatan, Prince George, Richmond, Surry, Sussex and Westmoreland; and the cities of Colonial Heights, Emporia, Hopewell, Petersburg and Richmond.
- **Tidewater Regional Office:** John.mcleod@deq.virginia.gov, (757) 518-2196, John McLeod; the Tidewater Regional Office serves the counties of Accomack, Isle of Wight, James City, Northampton, Southampton and York; and the cities of Chesapeake, Franklin, Hampton, Newport News, Norfolk, Poquoson, Portsmouth, Suffolk, Virginia Beach and Williamsburg.
- **Northern Regional Office:** Jennifer.carlson@deq.virginia.gov, (703) 583-3859, Jennifer Carlson; the Northern Regional Office serves the counties of Arlington, Caroline, Culpeper, Fairfax, Fauquier, King George, Loudoun, Louisa, Madison, Orange, Prince William, Rappahannock, Spotsylvania and Stafford; and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax, Falls Church, Fredericksburg, Manassas and Manassas Park.
- **Valley Regional Office:** Nesha.mcrae@deq.virginia.gov, (540) 574-7850, Nesha McRae; the Valley Regional Office serves the counties of Albemarle, Augusta, Bath, Clarke, Fluvanna, Frederick, Greene, Highland, Nelson, Page, Rockbridge, Rockingham, Shenandoah and Warren; and the cities of Buena Vista, Charlottesville, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Staunton, Waynesboro and Winchester.
- **Blue Ridge Regional Office:** Diana.hackenburg@deq.virginia.gov, (540) 562-6700, Diana Hackenburg; the Blue Ridge Regional Offices serve the counties of Alleghany, Amherst, Appomattox, Bedford, Botetourt, Buckingham, Campbell, Charlotte, Craig, Cumberland, Floyd, Franklin, Giles, Halifax, Henry, Lunenburg, Mecklenburg, Montgomery, Nottoway, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Prince Edward, Pulaski, and Roanoke; and the cities of Bedford, Clifton Forge, Danville, Covington, Lynchburg, Martinsville, Radford, Roanoke and Salem.
- **Southwest Regional Office:** Patrick.lizon@deq.virginia.gov, (276) 676-4803, Patrick Lizon; the Southwest Regional Office serves the counties of Bland, Buchanan, Carroll, Dickenson, Grayson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington, Wise and Wythe; and the cities of Bristol, Galax and Norton.

H. EVALUATION AND AWARD CRITERIA

Projects will be scored based on the evaluation criteria sections listed below, in order to prioritize projects for the distribution of available funds. A team of DEQ staff will evaluate grant applications and proposed projects. All projects approved for funding will be through this RFP will be announced on DEQ's website.

Evaluation Criteria	Maximum points
Project Information. The proposal provides sufficient detail on project activities to evaluate the capacity of project sponsor to complete proposed activities.	10
Organizational Structure and Purpose supportive of local and regional watershed restoration goals. The proposal demonstrates the capability of the sponsor and partners to successfully complete the project (e.g. qualifications, expertise, and role within the community). The group has met or is on-track to meet previous commitments or proposals proffered via these funding sources.	20
Work Plan and Timeline Includes activities and events to promote watershed stewardship. The proposed timeline and milestones are realistic for the grant period. Acquisition of necessary permits, authorizations, and approvals are accounted for in the timeline	20
Participation in Large Scale Watershed Planning. The proposal acknowledges the need to participate in development of the Nonpoint Source Management Plan and (if applicable) the Chesapeake Bay TMDL Watershed Implementation Plan milestones.	5
Outcomes (Education and Outreach, Watershed Stewardship, Partnership building and collaboration). The education and outreach activities and/or watershed stewardship BMPs described in the proposal support existing or well-described watershed planning efforts.	20
Experience with Project Administration. The applicant has the experience and capacity to manage grants and projects and has the capability to complete all grant-related requirements. Past record of grant projects received by 319 or CBIG will be taken into account. Applicants who have had previous grants cancelled due to cause or who have had awarded grant funds reduced due to cause may experience an automatic 10 point deduction.	25
Evaluation Criteria Maximum Points	100